This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

- 1. (Original) A method of alerting a user to configuration errors of shapes representing software artifacts and displayed on a visual design surface, the method comprising:
 - (a) displaying an icon next to a shape to represent at least one configuration error associated with the shape; and
 - (b) in response to a user selecting the icon, displaying at least one proposed solution to a configuration error.
 - 2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further including:
 - (c) comparing shape configuration parameters of the shape to configuration parameter rules.
- 3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the configuration parameter rules are selected based on a context in which the shape is being used.
- 4. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein (c) is performed after (a) and further including:
 - (d) removing the icon when the configuration error no longer exists.
 - 5. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein (c) is repeated periodically.
- 6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein (c) is repeated when at least one configuration parameter of the shape changes.
- 7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein (c) is repeated when at least one configuration parameter of a shape other than the shape in (a) changes.
- 8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one proposed solution comprises a dialog box.

- 9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the dialog box prompts a user to initialize a variable.
- 10. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the dialog box prompts a user to set a configuration parameter.
- 11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one proposed solution comprises a wizard.
- 12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one proposed solution comprises creating a new design element.
- 13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one proposed solution comprises adding a shape.
- 14. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one configuration error comprises a necessary shape that is not connected to the shape in (a).
- 15. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one configuration error comprises configuration parameters set in an inconsistent manner.
- 16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the inconsistent configuration parameters are configuration parameters of the same shape.
- 17. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the inconsistent configuration parameters are configuration parameters of at least two shapes.
- 18. (Original) A method of alerting a user of configuration errors of shapes representing software artifacts and displayed on a visual design surface, the method comprising:
 - (a) displaying an icon next to a container shape to represent at least one configuration error with respect to a shape contained within the container shape; and
 - (b) in response to a user selecting the icon, displaying at least one proposed solution to the configuration error.
 - 19. (Original) The method of claim 18, further including:

- (c) expanding the container shape to display at least the shape contained within the container shape; and
- (d) displaying the icon next to a shape contained within the container shape and that contains the at least one configuration error.
- 20. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the at least one configuration error comprises a necessary shape that is not connected to the shape contained within the container shape.
- 21. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the at least one configuration error comprises configuration parameters set in an inconsistent manner.
- 22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the inconsistent configuration parameters are configuration parameters of the same shape.
- 23. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the inconsistent configuration parameters are configuration parameters of at least two shapes.
- 24. (Original) A method of alerting a user of configuration errors of shapes representing software artifacts and displayed on a visual design surface, the method comprising:
 - (a) comparing shape configuration parameters of a shape to configuration parameter rules to identify configuration errors;
 - (b) determining a common error that causes the identified configuration errors:
 - (c) displaying an icon next to a shape to represent the configuration errors; and
 - (d) in response to a user selecting the icon, displaying at least one proposed solution to the common error.
- 25. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the at least one proposed solution comprises setting a configuration parameter.
- 26. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the at least one proposed solution comprises creating a new design element.

- 27. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the at least one proposed solution comprises adding a shape.
- 28. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the common error comprises a necessary shape that is not connected to the shape in (a).
- 29. (Original) In a computer system having a graphical user interface including a display and a user interface selection device, a method of indicating configuration errors of elements displayed on a visual design surface and representing software artifacts, the method comprising:
 - (a) displaying a plurality of the elements on the design surface;
 - (b) displaying an icon next to an element to identify a configuration error associated with the element; and
 - (c) in response to a command from the interface selection device, displaying at least one proposed solution to the configuration error.
- 30. (Original) A computer readable medium containing computer executable instructions for causing a computer system to perform the steps comprising:
 - (a) displaying on a design surface a plurality of shapes representing software artifacts;
 - (b) displaying an icon next to a shape to represent at least one configuration error associated with the shape; and
 - (c) in response to a user selecting the icon, displaying at least one proposed solution to a configuration error.